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CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE BRITISH ARCHIVES  
CONCERNING TEXAS, 1837-1846

V

EDITED BY EPHRAIM DOUGLASS ADAMS

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 6.

Galveston April 25. 1843.

My Lord,

I have the honor to report that the two Texian Vessels of War "Austin" and "Wharton" sailed from the N. E. Pass of the Mississippi on the 19th Instant, destined as it is generally supposed, to the Coast of Yucatan. It is certain that this step has been taken by the Commander of the Vessels in spite of repeated positive orders of this Government to return direct to this Port. And I am in a situation to inform Your Lordship that the arrangements between that Officer and the persons in authority in Yucatan were made without the sanction of this Government, and have been disavowed and disapproved in the most unequivocal language by the President of Texas.<sup>2</sup>

The embarrassments of this Government upon the subject must no doubt be much increased, if a report which has recently been circulated in this place be well founded, and I am disposed to attach credit to it. That statement is that the Government of the United States has directed it's Agent here to call upon this Government to desist from any further pursuit of the unsustainable character of Warfare which has been waged between this Republic and Mexico for some time past, and has further notified that Instructions to the same effect will be transmitted to their Minister at Mexico. I should perhaps mention that I have not heard that these last instructions direct General Thompson to press the point of the acknowledgment of the Independence of Texas on the Mexican Government but merely the cessation of the objectionable description of Warfare. Neither do I hear or ob-

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>For additional facts concerning the course pursued by Commodore E. W. Moore, see THE QUARTERLY, XIII, 113 ff.

serve any thing disposing me to modify the opinion that there is no earnestness upon that subject at Washington on the Potomac.

The Texian Vessels are said to be incompletely manned, with crews of a mixed character: I make no doubt, however, that they will be handled with becoming behaviour if any opportunity of collision presents itself, but I am afraid that there is no room to expect that this unauthorized proceeding can produce any other than injurious consequences. If there be success, and the Officer is sustained by the people here it will be a triumph over the Authority of the Government and the Law, and in other respects probably not very remote, of extremely unfortunate tendency.

And if there be a reverse the consequences will of course be very serious. In the mean time the state of the fact is, that these Vessels are sailing the Seas without due warrant from any constituted Authority. And I have had enough of experience of Naval Affairs to offer the opinion that the power of the Officer in Command to maintain any more control over their movements than may be agreeable to the general will of the Crews, will disappear as soon as it is generally known that He is himself acting in violation of the orders of his Government

I must not close this despatch without once more assuring Your Lordship that there is not the least doubt that the step this Officer has taken is entirely upon his own responsibility, and contrary to his knowledge of the desire of the Government that He should repair direct to this Port. I shall consider it my duty to forward extracts of as much of this despatch to the Senior Officer of Her Majesty's Ships in the Gulph of Mexico, as may place him in possession of the circumstances under which these Vessels are operating, with a suggestion that their movements should be reported to the Commander in Chief, to Her Majesty's Minister at Mexico, and in the event of any proceeding of consequence, by any direct means which may present themselves to England.

Charles Elliot.

The Right Honorable

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 7.

Galveston April 29th. 1843.

My Lord,

The accompanying Newspaper<sup>2</sup> contains a letter from Mr. Van Zandt, Chargé d' Affaires of this Republic near the Government of the United States to the Address of Mr. Archer, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations in the Senate of the United States, in support of the proposed treaty between the two Republics. It will be observed that the treaty was not ratified by the Senate of the United States; but Containing the principles of the arrangement as assented to by the two Governments, I have considered it proper to submit Mr. Van Zandt's letter for Your Lordship's information.

The refusal of the Senate of the United States to ratify the treaty with this Country has led the President to direct the enforcement of the provision of the tariff Laws of Texas, levying a duty of 5 per Cent ad valorem on Imports in Vessels of Countries, not having treaties with this Republic.

Charles Elliot.

To The Right Honorable.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>3</sup>

No. 9.<sup>4</sup>

Galveston, May 9th, 1843.

My Lord,

The Inclosure No. 1 is the copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires at Mexico covering copies of a Communication addressed to him under date 19th April by Senor de Borangra, <sup>5</sup> and of his own reply dated on the same day, but as these last will have no doubt already reached Your Lordship direct from Mexico I do not transmit them through this Channel. I have

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>*The Texian and Brazos Farmer*, April 15, 1843.

<sup>3</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>4</sup>No. 8, Elliot to Aberdeen, acknowledging receipt of despatches, is omitted.

<sup>5</sup>José María de Bocanegra.

also the honor to forward the Copy of my own reply to Mr. Doyle.<sup>1</sup>

There seems less reason to think that these declarations of the Mexican Government are the forerunners of any serious attempt to recover it's Authority over this Country than to discourage [emigration?] to it, and prevent it's settlement. But continued hostilities of this partial nature, (particularly if they be preceded, as the last were, by fallacious proclamations that the advancing parties were the Van Guards of invading Armies, and now by a declaration of a very unsustainable description as regards the rights of Neutral Governments and their Subjects) will probably attract the serious attention of Powers having treaty relations with Texas.

It may be added too that their object of preventing the Settlement of the Country seems to be ill-considered both as respects the hope of fulfilment, and the consequences of the mode of operation. For though it is quite true that the Mexican Government has succeeded in obstructing the settlement of the Western Country by steady and respectable people disposed to cultivate the Soil in peace, and particularly by European Emigrants whom the Climate and advantages of that portion of the Republic would otherwise attract, it is no less true that that Section of Texas is becoming the resort of Men from all parts of the World ready for, and equal to desperate enterprize of any description.

If General Santa Aña cannot be promptly arrested in this bad policy I am afraid it will soon be found that He is doing no more than securing the rapid organization of advanced bands of what will accumulate into a formidable irruptionary Movement.

Your Lordship will be enabled to judge in some degree from the inclosed proclamation<sup>2</sup> how disquietingly the actual State of Western Texas sustains this reasoning, and it is my duty to add that

<sup>1</sup>Percy Doyle, British chargé d'affaires at Mexico in 1843, after Pakenham's return to England, and until Bankhead's arrival in Mexico in March, 1844.

<sup>2</sup>Proclamation of the president, April 27, 1843. It declared martial law in the territory between the Rio Frio and Nueces Rivers and the Rio Grande, and ordered all armed parties upon the western frontiers, claiming to act under authority of the government, except Major John C. Hays, to disperse, and not further to molest the citizens of the frontier by acts of lawlessness (*Telegraph and Texas Register*, May 17, 1843).—EDITORS OF THE QUARTERLY.

with wise and honorable dispositions on the part of the Government of Texas, It is wholly without power to regulate or control the course of events in the particulars now drawn under the attention of Her Majesty's Government.

There is much reason to fear that the Mexican Government has suffered itself to be precipitated into the dismal Measure of decimating the Texian prisoner's taken at Mier, and lately recaptured after a successful rise against their guard. It is impossible to ascribe such extraordinary ignorance of the character of these people to General Santa Aña, as to suppose that He could think after a moment's reflection that such Measures were calculated to intimidate them, and hasty orders upon a subject of so much moment, and such very serious consequences can not be too deeply deplored. If these proceedings have had place they will influence these people to the highest degree, and in other respects cast increased difficulty upon the Mexican Government that there was much need for more prudent Conduct.

It will probably be declared here that some of the prisoners put to Death by these undistinguishing orders were amongst those who used their best efforts to prevent outrage, and absolutely risked their lives, in the attempt, and the Mexican Government has unhappily deprived itself of conclusive means of refuting such allegations. But beyond this I am sure it will be felt by Her Majesty's Government that the Mexican Government was bound by the conditions of the Capitulation assented to by their Commanding Officer at Mier, and the act of successful rise of a body of prisoners against their guard is no warrant for any other Measures than those of more effectual precaution, if they should be retaken.

If particular outrage was charged against them, enquiry should have been had in a regular Military Way, however summarily, and no blame could have attached to the Mexican Government for any proceedings it might have seen fit to take after investigation by responsible Officers. I anxiously hope that General Santa Aña, will upon more mature reflection have dispatched orders of a more suitable nature than those in question here, and that they will have arrived in time to prevent a shocking event.

H. M. S. *Spartan* sailed again for Vera Cruz this day with my reply to Mr. Doyle.

Charles Elliot.

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

DOYLE TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

[Enclosure] Copy.

Mexico, 20 April 1843.

Charles Elliot.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform You of my arrival in Mexico, having been accredited in the Character of Chargé d' Affaires of this Government.

I take the earliest opportunity of communicating to you a note which I have this day received from the Mexican Government, intimating that on the entry of their troops into the Territory of Texas, they will acknowledge no right, whether as respects their persons or their property, in such individuals as may be found established in that Country, and who may be taken prisoners, nor will they reply to any representations addressed to them in favour of such prisoners,—that they will treat all who may be found in Texas as actual invaders and enemies of the Republic, and will cause them to be punished according to the laws of Mexico. They also protest that they will not acknowledge any right in foreign Consuls found in that Territory to be treated otherwise than as Neutral Foreigners, intimating that such character even will not be respected in case they oppose, either directly or indirectly the right, in its full extent, whereby Mexico is endeavouring to recover possession of her Territory.

I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of the reply which I have thought it my duty to return to this Communication of the Mexican Government.

I have requested the Honble. Captain Elliot<sup>2</sup> of Her Majesty's Ship "*Spartan*" to proceed to Galveston as soon as he may consider it compatible with the interests of Her Majesty's Service, in

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>George Elliot, in command of H. M. S. *Spartan* until June 27, 1843, when he was promoted to the command of the *Eurydice*. (British Sessional Papers, 1844—Commons—Vol. 33. Return of Naval Appointments from October 1, 1841, to March 1, 1844, p. 3.)

order that you may be enabled to take such Steps as may seem expedient to you for the protection of British Subjects and their interests under the extraordinary circumstances of this crisis, but as it is necessary that the "Spartan" should return without delay to the Mexican Ports for the purpose of conveying specie to our Colonies, I trust you will not find it necessary to detain her long.

I have been informed that it is the intention of the Mexican Government, as soon as they shall have brought the Department of Yucatan back to its allegiance, to direct the Squadron, together with a considerable land force, upon Texas, and as intelligence has just reached Mexico of the submission of Merida the Capital of Yucatan, and the adherence of Genl Yuran,<sup>1</sup> a person of considerable influence among the aborigines, who constitute a majority of the population, it is probable that the whole force now employed in that quarter may shortly be disposable for any operations which the present Government of this Republic may think fit to undertake.

I shall also write to Admiral Sir Charles Adam,<sup>2</sup> to inform him of what has occurred, in order that he may take whatever steps he may think necessary on this occasion

Percy W. Doyle

Captain Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed] Inclosure No. 1 in Capt'n. Elliot's Despatch to Lord Aberdeen. No. 9. May 9th. 1843.

ELLIOT TO DOYLE<sup>3</sup>

[Enclosure] Copy.

Galveston May 7th. 1843.

Charles Elliot

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 20th Ultimo, with its Inclosures.

It is to be wished that your note of the same date (20th April) to Senr. de Bocanegra may have reminded the Mexican Government of the grave character of any hostile movement against this

<sup>1</sup>Santiago Iman.

<sup>2</sup>Commander in Chief in the West Indies, 1841-1845. (Stephen, *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, I, 85.)

<sup>3</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.



Country preceded by a plain declaration of the determination to disregard treaty engagements between other Powers and this Republic, practically denying to the Governments of great and friendly Countries, any right to clothe their servants with a public character in Texas, and further giving special warning that the Mexican Government will only consider these Officers to be neutral foreigners, and separate them from the classification of real invaders, and enemies of Mexico into which all other foreigners found in this Country are to be cast, and from punishment as such according to the laws of Mexico, upon the express condition that they neither directly or indirectly oppose themselves to the full exercise of the rights of Mexico to recover its authority over Texas, as expounded by the Mexican Government, and exercised by Mexican Military Officers

In the event of the entrance of a Mexican force into this Country Her Majesty's Officers here will regulate their proceedings, by the rules of public law, for the government of neutrals in such Cases.

And if such a circumstance should take place before I can receive instructions from Her Majesty's Government, I shall consider it incumbent upon myself formally to declare and assert the privileges and immunities of Her Majesty's Officers in this Republic as well as the rights and liabilities of all Her Majesty's other subjects resident or trading here

I shall also hold it to be my duty to protest against the consequences of any hostile movement founded upon the purposes or principals declared in Senr. de Bocanagrar's note of the 20th Ulto. or to be undertaken till those principles and purposes shall have been authentically disclaimed and disavowed, so far as they menace the rights and safety of Her Majesty's Officers and Subjects resident or trading here.

Charles Elliot.

Percy Doyle, Esq. Her Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires Mexico.

[Endorsed] Inclosure No. 2 in Captn. Elliot's Despatch to Lord Aberdeen. No. 9. 9th May. 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>*Private.*

New Orleans, May 12th 1843

My Lord

On my arrival here whither I have taken the liberty to come on my way to Havanna to meet Mrs. Elliot I find that accounts have reached this place which do not seem to be doubted by persons competent to Judge, though they are certainly entirely at variance with those that reached us at Galveston by H. M. S. "Spartan" coming direct from Mexico. The last tidings, however, are necessarily much later, and I should presume more trustworthy. By them it appears that a division of the Mexican force moving upon Merida, and said to consist of nearly 2000 Men, found themselves compelled to surrender by Capitulation, from want of secure communications with their Squadron, and failure of Supplies.

Agreeably to the reported terms of the Capitulation the surrendering force was to depart for Mexico in 8 days, with their Arms, but their Artillery and Materiel to be held by the Yucantanese till affairs are finally adjusted between the contending parties. This event is said to have taken place on the 24th Ultimo. It is also reported that Commodore Moore with his two Texian Vessels of War have been partially engaged with the Mexican Steam Ships and succeeded in checking them.

I use the freedom of this mode of communication to mention to Your Lordship that I am troubled with an Ague contracted in a long and painful Service in hot Countries, and I should consider it a favor if Your Lordship would sanction my passing the Months of July, August, and September in the Mountains of Kentucky where I have been advised as there are Springs of great virtue for Complaints of that kind. I have the less reluctance in proffering this request, as I can always be at my post within two weeks from that Situation, and be in the constant receipt of tidings from Texas of ten days or a fortnight's date. It may also be added that Congress in Texas does not meet till December, and the Officers of the Texian Government usually disperse during the hot Season.

Charles Elliot.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

KENNEDY TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>*Separate.*British Consulate  
Galveston, May 15th. 1843.

My Lord.

In the absence of Captain Elliot, Her Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires in Texas, who left Galveston last week for New Orleans, I have the honor to transmit Copies of three documents which have emanated from the Government of this Country, relative to the position of the Texian Navy now at Sea, and the steps taken by the Executive with regard to it's Commander, Commodore Moore: namely,

No. 1. Copy of a Proclamation by the President; dated March 23rd. 1843.<sup>2</sup>

No. 2. Copy of a despatch to Commodore Moore from the department of War and Marine; dated March 21st. 1843.

No. 3. Copy of Instructions issued by the Executive to Commissioners James Morgan and William Bryan Esquires, dated March 23rd. 1843

In addition to the above, I have the honor to inclose the Copy of a despatch to Captain Elliott, and the Copy of a letter to the Collector of Customs at this port (as the intermediate agent of the President) in explanation of the Circumstances under which I have deemed it my duty to communicate to Your Lordship the papers herewith sent.

I shall forward to Captain Elliott, under Cover to the British Consul at New Orleans, by the same Conveyance that bears this, the whole of the documents addressed by President Houston to Her Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires

The President, writing to Captain Elliot, states that "All that has been done by Commodore Moore since the 5th Ultimo, has been in violation of orders, and under suspension and arrest." "On the 5th April," he adds "the order of the Department of War and Marine was placed in his (the Commodore's) hands."

It seems to be the hope and wish of the President that Her Majesty's Government may receive the Proclamation and collateral documents as evidence of the sincere and anxious desire of his

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

<sup>2</sup>The proclamation is printed in THE QUARTERLY, XIII, 110-111.

Government to prevent aggressive Action against Mexico, unless offensive operations should be rendered necessary by the Conduct of that Country towards Texas.

William Kennedy.

H. B. M. Consul at Galveston

May 16th. The Steamer for New Orleans has delayed its departure until today, which gives me the opportunity of forwarding a published letter from Commodore Moore that has just appeared.<sup>1</sup>

W. K.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

HAMILTON TO MOORE.<sup>2</sup>

*Copy.*

Department of War and Marine  
Washington 21st March, 1843.

To Post Capt. E. W. Moore. T. N.  
New Orleans.

Sir.

Your Communication of the 10th inst. has just been received; by which the Department is advised of the receipt by you, of orders dated 22nd Jany. last requiring your immediate presence at the Seat of Government, and notified at the same time, that you decline the execution of the same.—Alleging as a reason for thus disregarding the plain and positive Commands of the President, that you have been placed “in Command by the Constituted authorities of the Country, and acting under orders from the Department, from which source alone you look for orders (which have never been rescinded or countermanded”).

Notwithstanding the orders to you of 29th October, reiterated on the 5th and 16th November, to report with the vessels under your Command, at Galveston; which orders you acknowledge to have received, and which were repeated again on the 2nd Decr. with the additional injunction to report in person to the Department; and renewed on the 2nd of January<sup>3</sup>—which last you have also received, as allusion is made to it in your Communication.

<sup>1</sup>Page 307 below.

<sup>2</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

<sup>3</sup>The order of January 2, 1843, is printed in *Secret Journals of the Senate, Republic of Texas*, 265.

The "Sealed Orders" to which you refer were issued under the belief that you could, with the means placed in your hands by the Govt. prepare the Squadron for sea, and on that condition alone. You failed to do so, rendered the orders null; and hence your orders to proceed to Galveston and report; which, in the opinion of the Department, countermanded your previous orders to cruize upon the Gulf. That you may *distinctly* understand the wishes of the Department, however, the "*Sealed orders*" of 15th Sept 1842, *together with all others, not in accordance with this, are hereby revoked.*

Any negotiations which may have been concluded, or may now be in progress with the Commissioners of the Government of Yucatan, have been entered into without the Authority or sanction, or even knowledge of the Government, and will not be recognized by it.

In consequence of your repeated disobedience of orders, and failure to keep the Department advised of your operations and proceedings, and to settle your accounts at the Treasury within three, or at most in six months from the receipt of the Money which has been disbursed as the laws require, and as you were recently ordered to do, You are hereby suspended from all Command, and will report forthwith in Arrest, to the Department, in person.

Any interference on your part with the Command, or with those who have been directed to assume it, will be regarded by the Government as Mutiny and Sedition, and punished accordingly.

By Order of the President.

M. C. Hamilton

Actg.: Sec: War and Marine

[Endorsed.] No 2. In Mr Consul Kennedy's despatch marked "Separate" of May 15th 1843.

HOUSTON TO MORGAN AND BRYAN<sup>1</sup>

*Copy.*

To James Morgan.  
and Wm. Bryan, Esquires.

Executive Department  
Washington, Texas.  
March 23d/43.

Gentlemen,

Your report of the 10th inst. with the accompanying papers, has

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

been laid before me, by the acting head of the War and Marine Department. In full contemplation of all the subjects involved in the transaction, I must now render my orders, touching the attainment of the design of Congress, in passing the Secret act for the disposition of the Navy.<sup>1</sup>

Col. William Bryan, Consul of Texas, and Naval Commissioner, will immediately proceed to New Orleans, and in connection with Col. James Morgan, also Naval Commissioner, employ all proper and legal means to get possession of the National vessels, the Ship Austin and Brig Wharton, likewise all the public Stores, arms, equipments, and public property, of every description, belonging to the Republic; holding the same subject to the future orders of the Government of Texas. Should any resistance be made to the orders of this Government, by any officer of the Navy, or by other persons, you will apply, in the name of this Government, to the Federal or other proper Authorities of the United States, and demand of the same, such aid, as may be compatible with the relations of the two Countries, and the Laws of Nations

Post Captain E. W. Moore has had no authority from this Government, to Ship Men, appoint officers, enlist marines, or do any other act, or thing, but to sail to the port of Galveston, and report, or turn over the Command of the Navy to the Senior officer next in rank present, and report in person to the Department. Since the 29th October 1842, he has had no Authority to enter into any arrangements with Yucatan, nor could do so, without contumacy to his superiors, or treason to his Country. The fact of his shipping men, or enlisting or receiving, volunteer marines, with an intention of going out to Sea, without the orders, or sanction of his Government, or contrary to order, on armed vessels, will clearly render it a case cognizable by the Government Authorities of the United States. His setting at "defiance the laws of his own Country" to which he owes allegiance, is clearly treason.—When the orders under which he received his "Sealed Orders" were suspended, by the order for him to repair to Galveston, the "Sealed Orders" were of no avail, and it is his duty to return them "Sealed" to the Department: as the event authorizing *the Seal to be broken* has not transpired, and can not now occur, under the Sanction of his

<sup>1</sup>The secret act to provide for the sale of the navy of Texas is printed in *Secret Journals of the Senate, Republic of Texas*, 316.

Government.—His existence as an officer is derived from the organs and functionaries, under the Constitution and Laws of Texas, and he is bound to know and obey them. Not to obey, is “Unofficer-like” to “resist” them is “Mutiny,” and to “defy” them is “treason.” For him to *persist would be “Piracy.”*

Should Post Captain E. W. Moore not forthwith render obedience to the orders of the Department, with which you are furnished, you will have published, in one or more Newspapers, in the City of New Orleans my Proclamation, and forward one authentic Copy with which you are furnished to the Hon. Ashbel Smith, Chargé d’ Affaires of Texas, to France, at Paris, and also a Copy to our Chargé d’ Affaires to the United States, the Hon. Isaac Van Zandt, at Washington City.

It is deplorable for a Nation to be reduced to the dilemma of either exposing the Shameless delinquencies, and most flagrant crimes of her officers, or suffer herself to become the object of contempt, or the victim, of insubordination and anarchy.

Our national humiliation is attributable to a few disorganizing men, who seek power without Merit, and a few incendiary presses, which are supported by such men, with the avowed design, of prostrating the Constitutional Officers, by Revolution. *They shall fail.*—I suggest these facts, that you may meet and counteract their influence for the Nation’s sake, and honor. I beseech you to intermit nothing, until you have accomplished, the objects of the law, for the prompt execution of which you were appointed

Should sickness, or any other cause, prevent the Commissioners, from acting jointly, they, or either of them, may act in all things, separately and singly, but not adversely.

Sam. Houston

[Endorsed.] No 3. In Mr Consul Kennedy’s despatch marked “Separate” of May 15th 1843.

KENNEDY TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

*Copy.*

British Consulate.

Galveston, May 15th 1843.

Sir,

Major Cocke, Collector of Customs at this port, called upon me yesterday Morning, bearing a packet from President Houston,

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

addressed to you, which I was given to understand the President was desirous I should open, in the event of your absence.—Packets containing similar enclosures—Major Cocke informed me—had been simultaneously transmitted to the Ministers of France and of the United States, resident at this place.

Permit me to refer you, for explanation of the course I deemed it best to pursue, to the enclosed Copy of a letter to Major Cocke, acknowledging the receipt of the packet and its enclosures

I beg to assure you, Sir, that it was with reluctance, I opened a Communication addressed to you, notwithstanding the intimation of Major Cocke, who was aware of its contents. On this occasion, however, the persuasion that I should be acting as you would wish me to act under the circumstances, and that I should thereby best consult the interests of the service, induced me to waive my scruples,—More especially as the packet bore not the slightest intimation of being other than of a purely public character.

William Kennedy

Captain Chas. Elliot. R. N.

[Endorsed.] No 4. In Mr Consul Kennedy's despatch marked Separate of May 15. 1843.

KENNEDY TO COCKE<sup>1</sup>

*Copy.*

British Consulate.

Galveston, May 15th 1843.

Sir.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt, through your hands, on yesterday, of a packet transmitted by the President, General Sam Houston, to Captain Elliot, R. N., Her Britannic Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires in Texas, and, which in consonance with your suggestion,—as being agreeable to the wishes of the President, and otherwise expedient,—I opened in your presence.—The said packet contained the following documents, viz:—

No. 1. Copy of a Proclamation by the President of the Republic, respecting Commodore Moore and the Texian Navy; dated March 23rd 1843.

No. 2. Copy of a Despatch to Commodore Moore, from the Department of War and Marine dated. March 21st 1843.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.



No 3. Copy of Instructions issued by the President to the Commissioners, James Morgan and William Bryan, Esquires, dated March 23rd 1843.

Nos. 4 and 5. Two letters from the President to Captain Elliot.<sup>1</sup>

By the return of the Hon, Anson Jones Secty of State, to the Seat of Government, the President will have been apprized of the absence of Captain Elliot from Galveston, he having proceeded to New Orleans, for the purpose of meeting his lady at Havannah, on her way from England. Under the circumstances, and being in the receipt of no specific instructions, I shall feel it my duty forthwith to transmit the several documents heretofore named and enumerated under cover to the British Consul at New Orleans, for Captain Elliot; and to forward, at the same time, copies of the President's Proclamation, the Despatch to Commodore Moore, and the Instructions to the Commissioners, Messrs. Morgan and Bryan, to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Do me the favour to convey to the President the assurance of my profound respect

William Kennedy.

H. B. M. Consul at Galveston

Major Cocke, Collector of Customs.

P. S. Should Captain Elliot be in New Orleans on the arrival of the New York Steamer, (by which I shall forward the communications addressed to him by the President,) it will not, of course, be necessary for my Agent to transmit the documents I have mentioned to Her Majesty's Secretary of State.

[Endorsed.]. No. 5. In Mr Consul Kennedy's despatch, marked "Separate" of May 15th. 1843.

<sup>1</sup>For the first of these letters, see Elliot to Aberdeen, No. 10, May 29, 1843. The second is presumably Houston's letter of May 13, enclosed in Elliot to Aberdeen, *Secret*, June 8, 1843. Pp. 311-312, 318-321.

MOORE TO THE TEXAS TIMES<sup>1</sup>

Texas Sloop of War Austin,  
Outside N. E. Pass, Miss.

April 19th, 1843.

Mr. F. Pinckard, Editor of the Texas Times,  
Galveston, Texas.

In the event of my being declared by proclamation by the President as a Pirate, or outlaw; you will please state over my signature that I go down to attack the Mexican Squadron, with the *consent* and *full concurrence* of Col. James Morgan, who is on board this Ship as one of the Commissioners to carry into effect the secret act of Congress, in relation to the Navy, and who is going with me, believing as he does that it is the best thing that could be done for the country.

This Ship and the brig have excellent men on board, and the officers and men are all eager for the contest.—We go to make *one desperate struggle* to turn the tide of *ill luck* that has so long been running against Texas.

You shall hear from me again as soon as possible.

E. W. Moore.

ABERDEEN TO ELLIOT<sup>2</sup>

Draft.  
Captain Elliot.  
No. 5.<sup>3</sup>

Foreign Office  
May 18th. 1843.

Sir,

I have received your Letter of the 29th of March, in which you inform me that a Texian Citizen named Robinson had arrived in Texas bearing to the President of Texas from General Santa Anna Propositions of a peculiar but pacific character for the adjustment of the Differences between the Two Countries

Those Propositions although calculated and perhaps intended to

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by *The Morning Star*, May 18, 1843.

<sup>2</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6. The concluding phrase of the last paragraph only has been printed in Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1096; in Am. Hist. Assoc. *Report*, 1908, II.

<sup>3</sup>Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 Aberdeen to Elliot have been omitted. No. 1 transmitted correspondence with Ashbel Smith on the *Guadalupe* and *Montezuma*. No. 2 was an inquiry as to the fate of a Mr. Orr, and No. 3 in regard to a Mr. J. Dickson. No. 4 transmitted a despatch from Pakenham, descriptive of the war between Mexico and Texas.

afford an opening for further Negotiations, do not appear to Her Majesty's Government to be of a very practical description, nor fitted in their present shape to create more than a faint hope of a satisfactory Settlement of those differences. But as Her Majesty's Government have received no Accounts from Mexico respecting those Propositions, and are therefore unable to judge of the Motives which gave rise to them, or of the probable course which the Mexican Government intend to pursue in furtherance of them, or even of the authenticity of the Propositions themselves, which yet appear uncertain, it is unnecessary, in the present stage of the business, to indulge in any speculations respecting this Matter.

With regard to the project for the annexation of Texas to the United States, which has formed the subject of some of your recent communications to this Office, Her Majesty's Government do not think it necessary to give you any Instructions at the present moment on that subject, further than to desire that you will assure the President of the continued interest which the British Government takes in the prosperity and independence of the State of Texas; and of their full determination to persevere in employing their endeavours, whenever they see a reasonable hope of success, to bring about an adjustment of the differences still existing between Mexico, and Texas, of which they so much lament the continuance.

KENNEDY TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 3.

British Consulate  
Galveston, May 22nd. 1843.

My Lord,

I have the honor to enclose a return in duplicate of the prices of Agricultural produce<sup>2</sup> within the limits of the Galveston Consulate, for the Quarter ending 31st March, 1843, together with a Memorandum, in reference thereto, also in duplicate. Although I was not empowered to enter upon the duties of My office until the 24th of February last, I have deemed it best to Commence these periodical Returns, which will be continued in regular succession, with the beginning of the year.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Returns of corn and grain prices were frequently made by Kennedy, but they are not printed here as they were merely copies of current prices quoted in newspapers.

From the observations in the "Memorandum," it will be seen that there is, at present, no export of Corn or Grain from this Port, and that the Return, as a register of the prices of this Class of domestic products, is almost valueless. Convenient lines of Communication must be opened and adequate means of transport provided before Galveston can possess a Corn Market worthy of the name.

In conformity with the terms of Paragraph 14 of my "Instructions," I have given the prices for each week of the quarter; at the same time, I am inclined to think that, under the circumstances of price and Supply, a Quarterly, or Monthly, average of Corn and Grain would be clear and more practically useful.

When in London during the Autumn of last year, I had the pleasure of presenting to the Hydrographic Office, at the Admiralty, some documents illustrative of the geography of Texas. And it was suggested that I should endeavour to obtain for the Department, a Copy of the Chart of the Coast used in the Texian Navy, and drawn up from the observation of its Commodore. Since my arrival at my post, I have endeavoured, not only to meet this particular suggestion, but to collect such additional Materials as might elucidate the general aspect and character of the Coast and limitary lines of the Republic. On the 8th of this Month, I had the satisfaction to transmit to Captain Beaufort, by Her Majesty's Ship of War Spartan, then lying off Galveston, the following documents; viz:—

1. General Chart of the Coast line of Texas, Compiled from the Observations of the Texian Commodore, and from the Boundary Survey made under the direction of the Commissioners of Texas and the United States.
2. Tracings of the Boundary line between Texas and the United States.
3. Large Plan of Galveston Island and Sketch.
4. Government Survey of the entrance to Galveston, recently made.
5. Survey of the Entrance to Matagorda Bay, by the Texian Commodore.
6. Running Survey of Corpus Christi and Aransas Bays.
7. Survey of the Rio Grande, from the Mouth to the Mexican town of Mier.

I hope to render these Materials, the Collection and Arrangement of which have entailed no expense upon the Admiralty, still more complete, but I have reason to believe that the information they embrace is nearly as ample and as reliable as can well be obtained, until it shall please Her Majesty's Government to employ a Vessel in Surveying the Coast.

William Kennedy.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

*Memorandum accompanying the Return of Corn and Grain  
from the Port of Galveston, Texas, for the Quarter  
ending March 31st. 1843.*<sup>1</sup>

Galveston. May 20th. 1843.

The Corn and Grain trade of Galveston is, at present, altogether unimportant in a Commercial point of View.

The only kind of grain yet produced, in noticeable quantities, throughout the lower section, or rich Cotton-growing region of Texas, indeed throughout the limits of the Republic—is Maize or Indian Corn; And, in consequence of the imperfect State of Communication with the interior, but little of that finds its way into the Galveston Market. Nearly all the Corn and grain consumed on the Island is imported from New Orleans; whence, also, are received Supplies of flour and potatoes, and even hay, oats, poultry and pork.—Thus although Texas is one of the most fertile Countries on the American Continent, the cost of living is higher at Galveston than in the United States or England.

Texas, admirably adapted to the raising of Stock, and the Cultivation of some of the more profitable products of tropical Agriculture, will, in all probability, never rank as a Corn-exporting Country; as it is likely to prove sounder economy for the farmers to exchange the great Staples of the Republic for the flour and small grains of the Western States of the neighbouring Union, than to incur the outlay of erecting an independent Supply.

There is no stock of Corn or grain in granary at Galveston. From New Orleans the importation is regular, being graduated by the wants of the population. Freight from New Orleans to Galveston is twenty Cents per bushel, for Corn, and fifteen Cents per bushel, for Oats.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 7.

The only restriction on the grain trade is an import duty Amounting to twenty Cents per bushel on Indian Corn and fifteen Cents per bushel on Oats, with fifteen per Cent *ad valorem* on other grains. In common with other Articles of import, subjected to taxation, grain introduced from Countries with which Texas has no Commercial Treaty, is liable to an additional duty of five per Cent *ad valorem*. This duty is at present levied on imports from the United States, owing to the non-renewal of the Treaty between the two Republics.

Freights to England is three fourths of a penny per pound for Cotton, by which freights generally are governed.

Exchanges at Galveston are ruled by the New Orleans rates. For the quarter ending March 31st. 1843, they ranged as follows, viz:—

*On the Dollar.*

January	10th. 1843.....	101½ to 102¼	Premium
	25th.....	103½ to 104.	
February	14th.....	101¾ to 102½.	
	25th.....	100¼ to 100¾	
March	10th .....	100½ to 101½.	
	24th.....	102 to 102½.	

[Endorsed] No 2. In Mr Consul Kennedy's despatch of May 22d 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

No. 10.

New Orleans. May 29th. 1843.

My Lord.

Mr Consul Kennedy's Despatch and its Inclosures will have placed Your Lordship in possession of the course taken by the Government of Texas with respect to Commodore Moore in command of the Texian Vessels of War "Austin" and "Wharton" off the coast of Yucatan; and I beg to add to the papers forwarded on that occasion the copy of a private letter from the President,<sup>2</sup> the substance of which your Lordship will observe He has desired should be communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Houston to Elliot, May 6, 1843, in Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1089; in Am. Hist. Assoc. *Report*, 1908, II.

The inclosure No. 2 is a Newspaper<sup>1</sup> containing accounts of an affair between the Mexican Squadron and the Texian Vessels of War on the 16th Inst. off Campeche. These reports are said to be made by the Commodore, and his Brother acting as his Secretary, and I perceive no ground to question their genuineness

It is proper to draw Your Lordship's attention to the details reported in these notes respecting the display of the English Ensign at the main of the Mexican Steam Ship "Guadaloupe" previous to the commencement of the action, and the immediate hoisting of the English and American Ensigns at the fore of the Texian Ship "Austin." No further particulars concerning this feature of these transactions are stated: I may add however, that I shall lose no time in forwarding a copy of this despatch to the Commander in Chief on this Station, to whom I have already communicated the movements, and situation of the Texian Vessels of War.

The recent proceedings of the Mexican Government towards the retaken Texian prisoners, joined to these accounts from the Coast of Yucatan and the measures of the President of Texas with respect to Commodore Moore, are said to be occasioning considerable excitement in this City, and probably more or less, throughout the whole Southern part of the Union.

Charles Elliot.

To the Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ABERDEEN TO KENNEDY<sup>2</sup>

*Slave Trade No. 1.*

Draft to Mr. Wm. Kennedy.

Sir,

Foreign Office

May 30. 1843.

I have to desire that you will do your utmost to obtain for the Information of H. M's Govt answers to the following queries.

1. What is at present the amount of the Population of the State in which you reside, and what the number of whites, and of coloured people forming that Population, distinguishing Males from

<sup>1</sup>Unidentified cutting.

<sup>2</sup>F. O., *Slave Trade*, Vol. 479. This instruction and Kennedy's answers (September 5 and 6, 1843) have been printed in British Sessional Papers, 1844, *Slave Trade Correspondence, Class C*, but are here inserted as of unusual interest. Kennedy's reply of September 5, 1843, will be printed later in its chronological order.

Females, and Free People from Slaves:—What was the amount of the population in the same State in the year 1832, and what was the amount in the year 1837, distinguishing the particulars as in the case of the present time?

2. Is it supposed that any Slaves have been imported into the Country within the last ten years, either direct from Africa or from other quarters; if so, how many in each year?

3. Is the Slave protected by Law equally with a free man in criminal cases?

4. What protection is there by Law to a Slave against ill-conduct on the part of his Master?

5. Is the evidence of a Slave received in a Court of Law?

6. Is the Slave well or ill-fed, well or ill-treated?

7. Is the Slave considered generally to enjoy as good health and to live as long as a free person?

8. Is the Slave population considered to be on the increase, or decrease, and from what causes?

9. Is the manumission of Slaves of common occurrence?

10. Have the Laws and Regulations in respect to Slaves become more or less favourable to them, within the last ten years?

11. Is there in the State in which you reside a party favourable to the Abolition of Slavery? and what is the extent and Influence of such party? And is such Party on the increase or otherwise?

12. Is there any difference in the eye of the Law between a free white and free coloured man?

13. Are free coloured men ever admitted to Offices of the State?

14. You will state whether you have drawn your answers from Public Documents, or from private Information; and you will state whether any Periodical Census is taken of the Population within the district of your Consulate, and what was the last period at which it was taken.

You will be careful to make your reply to each question as concise as possible.

I am, etc.

Aberdeen



ABERDEEN TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

Draft.  
Captain Elliot.  
No. 6.

Foreign Office  
June 3, 1843.

Sir,

With reference to your Letter dated the 29th of March, inclosing a printed Copy of the Propositions conveyed from General Santa Anna to the President of Texas, by the medium of Mr Robinson, to which Letter I made a brief reply by my Despatch No. 5, of the 18th Ultimo, I have now to communicate to you a Copy of a Despatch from Mr. Pakenham, dated the 23d of March,<sup>2</sup> relative to those Propositions. They appear to have been made by Genl. Santa Anna in the full hope, and even expectation, that they would be accepted by the Government of Texas as the basis of an adjustment between Texas and Mexico.

You will perceive from that Despatch that General Santa Anna has expressed his anxiety that Her Majesty's Government would employ their good offices in order to promote an arrangement between Mexico and Texas on the footing laid down in those Propositions.

Although Her Majesty's Government do not intend to make themselves in any way a Party to this Transaction or to incur any responsibility respecting it, they are nevertheless perfectly willing to employ their good offices, in an entirely neutral and impartial sense, in order to bring about a peaceful and equitable adjustment of the differences existing between Texas and Mexico.

It appears to Her Majesty's Government that the propositions of General Santa Anna go far to establish the virtual independence of Texas, although by the first of those Propositions Texas is required to acknowledge the Sovereignty of Mexico

Her Majesty's Government might have supposed that this latter demand had been put forward *pro formâ*, and, to save appearances, were it not that they have learnt from Mr Pakenham, since his arrival in England, that he does not consider it at all probable that General Santa Anna will recede from this Demand, since, even

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6. The letter is unsigned.

<sup>2</sup>F. O., Mexico, 161, No. 21. This despatch was written by Pakenham in Mexico, but carried in person to England. Doyle, as chargé, was now the British diplomat at Mexico.

were he personally disposed to do so, which he does not seem to be, public opinion would effectually oppose him in carrying out that inclination.

It may therefore be taken for granted that the demand for the recognition of the Sovereignty of Mexico will be adhered to by the Mexican Government.

Under these circumstances it will be for the Government of Texas to determine whether the virtual independence of Texas would, in their opinion, be too dearly purchased at the price of the nominal concession required of them, or whether it may not be well to admit that concession, and to look to the future for the means of removing that sole remaining badge of their dependence.

By adopting this course peace would be immediately secured, and with peace, commerce and agriculture would flourish, and the foundations of daily encreasing wealth and power would be at once laid.

Difficulties will undoubtedly stand in the way of giving practical effect to the propositions submitted to Texas by Mexico; and it is very obvious that various Modifications will be required in those Propositions before they can be carried into execution. But if both Parties enter upon the task of endeavouring to bring about an adjustment with good faith, and prosecute that task with temper and a full determination to bring it to a satisfactory issue, Her Majesty's Government do not perceive in the terms of accommodation proposed by Mexico any insurmountable obstacle to the conclusion of an agreement on equitable grounds between the Parties.

Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to offer any advice to the Government of Texas in this matter; but I repeat that they will very readily lend their good offices, whenever called upon, in order to facilitate the termination of the existing Dispute.

ABERDEEN TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

Draft.

F. O. June 3d. 1843.

Captain Elliot.

No. 7.

Sir.

I transmit to you herewith for your information, a Copy of a

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6. The letter is unsigned.

despatch from H. M. Minister in Mexico<sup>1</sup> respecting the recapture of a Body of Texians who had been made prisoners in an unsuccessful attempt to penetrate into Mexico and had overpowered the escort in charge of them, and also respecting the measures adopted by Genl Santa Anna with regard to those prisoners.

KENNEDY TO ELLIOT<sup>2</sup>

[Enclosure]

*Copy.*

Sir.

British Consulate

Galveston, June 5th 1843.

The following information which I have received, when taken in connexion with the general character of the relations subsisting between the United States and Texas, and the Critical Situation of the latter, appears to be of a sufficient importance to warrant the formality of a despatch. My informant, whose name I am not at liberty to mention is, I believe, quite worthy of trust, besides being a person of intelligence, and experience in the affairs of this Country.—I give his statement from a Minute which I took at the time.

“General Murphy”<sup>3</sup>—(says my informant)—“the new Minister from the United States to this Republic, has but lately returned from a diplomatic Mission to the Republic of Colombia. He is now entrusted with a Special Mission to Texas \* \* \*

“The object of his present Mission is to submit Certain propositions, with a view to some agreement between the United States and Texas. The Nature of these propositions, or agreement, is not specified. The only known ground of surmise is included in the following observations, which dropped from him in conversation with the Mayor and a deputation of Citizens, this Morning, between eleven and twelve o’clock.

“Texas”—General Murphy remarked—“was virtually independent, and the bombast of Mexico, like that of Spain, anticipated Matters that could never be accomplished. The border Warfare between Mexico and Texas was an evil which the United States would stop; and, in so doing, they would act in accordance with the sentiments of every other Civilized Nation. Texas should be,

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Mexico, 161, No. 11, March 22, 1843.

<sup>2</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 10. The letter is here placed in correct chronological order, though transmitted by Kennedy to Aberdeen, May 8, 1844.

<sup>3</sup>W. S. Murphy.

and, indeed, was independent, and all that could now be desired was a Security to emigrants to people the Country. The inhabitants of Texas wanted emigrants like themselves—and no others—Men speaking their own language, and subject to their own Customs and laws—Security would be given to such emigrants.—Our friends on the other side of the Water might be “*much irritated and disappointed*” (these latter, says my informant, are not the exact words, but, in meaning, they are substantially the same)—“*at the Matter, but what do we care for that?*” As a Virginian Member of Congress observed, in one of his Speeches at a former day—“For what reason should we ask for independence, when we are actually independent—what care we for that puny little Isle?”

I examined my informant as to the exact impression made upon him by the Minister’s tone and style of expression, when alluding to Great Britain:—his decided feeling, (he replied) was that they were unfriendly.

When, with this information is coupled the recent introduction of a South Carolina politician (Mr. Legaré)<sup>1</sup> into the Cabinet of the United States, in the room of Mr Webster, and the attempt to displace Mr. Everett as American Minister to England,<sup>2</sup> I am led to infer, Sir, that the observations of General Murphy, as reported to me, may not be wholly unworthy of your consideration.

General M. has, I understand, announced his intention to proceed to Washington on the Brazos, by way of Virginia Point, tomorrow.

William Kennedy.

Captain Elliot. R. N.

Her Majesty’s Chargé d’ Affaires (at Galveston)

*Copy.*

British Consulate  
Galveston June 7th. 1843.

Sir,

In reference to my Communication (No 3) of the 5th Inst., I beg to state that, according to information, more recently received, General Murphy was accredited to Guatemala, instead of Colombia

<sup>1</sup>Hugh Swinton Legaré, a prominent lawyer, writer and politician of South Carolina. He was attorney-general of the United States under President Tyler and on Webster’s resignation of the Secretaryship of State, conducted the duties of that office for a short period in 1843. (Appleton, *Cyclopedia of Amer. Biog.*, III, 677.)

<sup>2</sup>It was planned to have Webster replace Everett, but the latter clung to his position.

I have been further informed that he is an able engineer, much trusted by his Government, and that, during his Southern Mission, he made a Survey of the Country bordering on the river San Juan and the lake of Nicaragua, with a view to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by Means of a Canal Communication.

William Kennedy

Captain Elliot. R. N.

[Endorsed]. Enclosure No. 2. In Mr Consul Kennedy's despatch No. 7, dated May 8th, 1844.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN<sup>1</sup>

*Secret.*

Galveston

June 8th. 1843.

My Lord.

The Inclosure No 1 is the Copy of a private letter addressed to me by General Houston, which it is proper that I should transmit for the information of Her Majesty's Government. In his position, he necessarily could not request nor directly authorize me to forward this communication of his private views to Your Lordship.

But the subject of the letter is entirely political, and whilst I am sensible that these opinions have been communicated to me in the confidence of friendship, I am also persuaded that General Houston must have felt that they would be made known to Your Lordship, and I am equally satisfied that it would be unnecessary and unsuitable on my part to do more than mention my own earnest request that they should only be used for the private information of Her Majesty's Government. Your Lordship will readily conceive that in the state of feeling in this and the neighbouring Country, on such topics, they could not be publicly adverted to, without consequences of the highest inconvenience.

It will be noticed that General Houston has alluded to some Newspaper attacks to which He has been exposed both in this Country and the United States with respect to secret engagements with the British Government. And I should mention that the last time I conversed with him He touched upon these observations and strictures, at least as to the feelings of, Her Majesty's Government upon the existence of Slavery in Texas, for it had been alleged

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

amongst other things that Her Majesty's Government had required the abolition of Slavery in one of the South American Republics as the price of it's Mediatorial Offices with another; And it was thence argued that the same Concession was required from Texas.

I told General Houston that the sincere desire of Her Majesty's Government to put an end to the Contest between Mexico and this Country had been frequently declared; that I was sure He would understand that no conditions were intended, which were not expressed; and that the subject of Slavery in Texas had never been mentioned to me in any despatch from Her Majesty's Government, or by word of mouth. As to the feelings of the British Government and Nation upon the Subject of Slavery, abstractly considered, which seemed to be the foundation of these speculations of the press, they were well known to the whole World, and it was quite unnecessary to enter upon that topic; But as He had alluded to this Institution in Texas, I could not help expressing my own opinion that it's existence was a Subject of deep regret.

General Houston did not conceal his own opinions to the same effect, and added, that unless the propitious Moment of a Settlement of the difficulties with Mexico should be taken for devising some mode of getting rid of the Mischief, He foresaw that Texas would sooner or later become the "impound" of the Black and Coloured population of the United States, to the incalculable injury of it's well understood interests and happiness.

Another point which will require a few words of comment is the allusion to the case of the Prisoners taken at Mier in whose behalf I wrote to Mr Packenham at General Houston's request. I forwarded Mr Packenham an extract from General Houston's letter to me upon the Subject, in which I understood him to reason that the Prisoners were entitled to the benefit of the Capitulation with the Mexican Commanding Officer, though He did not deny that the movement beyond the Rio Grande had been made upon their own responsibility.

It seemed to me that his purpose in saying that was to free himself from the imputation of using language of aversion to irregular incursionary Warfare in his Communications with foreign Governments, whilst He sanctioned it in his orders to his own officers: But I certainly never supposed that General Houston intended or

wished that any representations of that kind should be made to General Santa Aña.

The accompanying extract from General Houston's letter upon the Subject will probably convince Your Lordship that his reasoning was addressed to me for representation to Her Majesty's Minister at Mexico, and I am sure that it will be a source of great surprise and concern to Mr Packenham, and entirely contrary to the [his?] wishes, that any other use has been made of it. General Houston's present remarks are founded upon declarations made by Prisoners recently released through the good offices of the American Minister at Mexico which have found their way into the public press, to the effect that General Thompson shewed them the Copy of General Houston's letter to me communicated to him in confidence by Mr. Packenham. It appears very probable that Mr. Packenham conferred with General Thompson upon the cause of these unfortunate people, but it is quite unnecessary to say that I am certain He never authorized the exhibition of General Houston's letter to these Texian Prisoners, or much less, gave the least room for the extremely unjust and injurious insinuation that General Houston wished to prejudice these prisoners in the sight of the Mexican Government.

Mr. Packenham's whole course in Mexico, with respect to the Government of Texas, and any Citizens of the Republic who fell into the hands of the Mexicans was marked by unvarying Consideration, and kindness, often too, as it is well known at considerable pecuniary Sacrifice, and it may be depended upon that any communication He might have had with General Thompson upon this subject, was made in a spirit of perfect appreciation of General Houston's Motives, and of a cordial disposition to meet his wishes.

I shall take occasion to say this to the President, and to add that I find it easier to believe that these released prisoner's misconceived General Thompson, than that He afforded them any ground to misrepresent General Houston's plain and kind purposes on their behalf. It remains to be hoped that there has been some mistake as to the representation that General Thompson shewed any of these released prisoners a Communication He had received from Mr Packenham in a confidential way.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding the original of General Houston's private letter to me, because it does not appear to me to

be desirable to retain it in this Country, in case of accident to my papers.

P. S.

Charles Elliot.

I abstain from offering any opinion upon the probable turn of affairs as respects this Country, in the present crisis, because with all things in a deplorable and helpless condition here, it is plain that results must depend chiefly on events, or Negotiations beyond my sphere of observation

Charles Elliot

The Right Honorable

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

HOUSTON TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

[Enclosure.]

Washington May 13th 1843.

(Private.)

My Dear Captain

We are much excluded here from important intelligence, among which may be reckoned the *thrilling* events passing in your Community of Galveston. We occasionally receive papers from the United States, and from them learn that they are taking a *very* deep interest in the Welfare of Texas—so far at least as the patriotic effusions of editors go. I may be mistaken, but I think the course pursued there is not difficult of comprehension.

For Texas not to be completely subservient to the United States, is regarded by them as rebellious and ungrateful. Their political parties have not yet determined what capital is to be made out of us; and the Southern section at least, with a hope of ultimate annexation, is unwilling that any change from our present attitude should take place. They perceive that, if a pacification is brought about between Texas and Mexico, by England, we must know that it will result more from generous feeling than from a hope of pecuniary gain, and will necessarily inspire, on the part of Texas, feelings of kindness arising from a sense of obligation. The *quid pro quo* of five Millions cannot be the desideratum with England now, for the time for that has passed by<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the plan whereby Texas was to assume five millions of the Mexican debt if Great Britain was instrumental in securing recognition of Texas by Mexico.



If England produces a pacification between this Country and Mexico, she will thereby secure a friend on the gulf whose contiguity to the United States, in the event of a War, would not be desirable to that country. All movements on the part of the U. States would seem to indicate that they have an eye to a rupture at some period not remote. But I need not suggest this to a gentleman of your observation. The genius as well as the excitability of that people, united to a bold and generous daring, impel them to war. Their love of Dominion, and the extension of their territorial limits, also, is equal to that of Rome in the last ages of the Commonwealth and the first of the Caesars.

The Continent of North America is regarded by the people of the U. States as their birth-right—to be secured by policy, if they can, by force if they must. Heretofore Texas has been looked upon as an appendage to the U. States. They cannot realise that we now form two Nations. Therefore every act done in reference to us by any power of which they are jealous, or for which they do not cherish kind national feelings, is regarded as an unauthorized interference and necessarily provokes their denunciation.

This is the case at present in relation to England, British influence and every ridiculous humbug which their crazed imaginations can start, are conjured up and marshalled in fearful array for the purpose of alarming Texas, exciting disorder, producing disrespect towards England, and compelling us to look to the U. States as our only hope of political salvation. They are willing to see Texas tantalized by every annoyance until, in a fit of despair, she is compelled to identify herself with them, and by some act of good fortune become incorporated with them—though they cannot precisely point out the means.

In support of this opinion, the rejection of the late treaty with us, by the U. States Senate, to my mind, was not at all an equivocal expression of the notions of that Country in relation to Texas. It was assigned as a reason, though not in debate, that the Condition of Texas was such as to render them reluctant to form closer connexions with us than those already established by their recognition of our independence, *and such provisions as they could make in our favor* BY LAW. Such reasons, I presume, have never been uttered concerning any other nation, since the establishment of Hayti. The humility of our condition, however, compels us to

*pocket* this; as the U. States regard us, from their expressions, nothing more than a pocket attached to their outer robe.

I shall look with *amusing* interest to the journals of the U. States for a formal denunciation of the Executive for having enforced the law requiring a discriminating duty upon articles imported from countries not in treaty with us. It will not be *the law or people* of Texas, I apprehend, that will be blamed, but the *Executive* for having *the audacity to enforce the law against THEM*. But so long as Texas does exist, I am determined, that if I should not be so fortunate as to conciliate good opinion, I will at least evince to the world that, so far as any merit may attach to the execution of her laws, so far as I have the power, I shall be entitled to it.

Texas has once evinced a willingness, amounting to unexampled unanimity, to become annexed to the United States, We sought the boon with humble supplications. In this posture we remained in the outer porch of their Capital for many months. Our solicitations were heard with apathy. Our urgency was responded to with politic indifference. Apprised of this, I directed our Minister to withdraw the proposition. This I did from a sense of national dignity. Since that time Texas has not renewed the proposition; and the United States now, in order to get it into an attitude before them that would be creditable to them, desire no doubt that Texas should again come forward soliciting the boon. They have not as yet received such indications as they desire. If it were the case, it would place the subject before the poli[ti]cal parties of the U. States, in a position different from that in which it now rests. In that event there would be but one question to ask: Shall the Annexation of Texas to the U. States take place? As it is, there are two: First, Is Texas *willing* to be annexed? Second, in that case, shall it be annexed? This renders the matter more complicated and produces feelings of excitement and irritability that induce the leading journals of certain sections in that Country to traduce and vilify the authorities of Texas in a very unbecoming manner. This I presume is done by [way?] of whipping prominent Men into the list of petitioners.

Again, if war between the U. States and England should take place, and the independence of Texas not be recognized by Mexico, or not annexed to the U. States, under the excitement and commo-

tion which would exist in a state of war, the contiguity of a situation united with kindred inhabitants, would, *without form of law*, amalgamate us with the U. States. If however the independence of Texas should be recognized through the medium of English influence, such a result could never take place. If the U. States upon the Gulf can maintain a parallel influence to that which they may establish on the Pacific, Texas will become a cantonment for the pioneers in the van of that mighty advance whose political power will not halt short of the isthmus of Darien. If Texas is sustained as an independent Nation, it will necessarily retard the consummation of schemes which, though now but in embryo, will at some future period be developed by much human suffering.

It is not selfishness in me to say that I desire to see Texas occupy an independent position among the Nation's of the earth, to which she is justly entitled by her enterprise, daring, sufferings and privations. The blood of her martyrs has been sufficient to give cement to the foundation of a great nation, and if her independence be steadily [speedily?] recognized by Mexico, heaven will direct and carry out her destiny to a glorious consummation. Every day that it is delayed affords to demagogues a theatre for mischief, and when repose should refresh her, factious political incendiaries are marching about with their torches of discord. I am weary of this state of things. All that Texas requires, to make her healthy and vigorous is a respite from execution.

I cannot believe that all this fustian about British influence and abolition in Texas, has its origin with the Government of the U. States. But in a Country where the Chief of it is elective in ninety nine cases out of one hundred, I presume the Administration derives complexion from the Clamours, or what is supposed to be the feelings, of the people. If so, as far as Southern influence can be exercised upon the Administration of that Govt. it is highly probable that the Agency of England, exercised in behalf of this Country would not receive a hearty cooperation from all the agents which that Government may have employed. Of Mr Tyler my opinion is too exalted to think that he would sanction a course so much at war with the avowed wishes of that Government—its natural Character and the rights of humanity.

If the prisoners who have been released by Santa Anna have reported truly the conduct of Genl. Thompson in Mexico, he could

have had but one object in view, and that was, by the return of those gentlemen to create a strong prejudice against the representative of Her Britannic Majesty in Texas, as well as the Executive, who was understood to be on terms of personal friendship with him and entertaining at the same time for his character and capacity the highest respect. If Gen. Thompson really has stated, as represented, *confidentially*, to *every* prisoner with whom he conversed, that Mr Pakenham, *enjoining secrecy*, had shown him a letter from yourself, stating that I had written to you desiring your interference—representing that the Mier prisoners had gone into the enemy's territory in violation of *My* orders, and that I hoped that Santa Anna would show them mercy etc. and if Gen. Thompson gave these things such a coloring as represented, the object is too plain. If Mr. Pakenham showed to Gen. Thompson any letter, it must certainly have been shown under, as he himself declared, injunctions of secrecy, and by violating these injunctions he acted in bad faith. Again—If its facts had been as represented by Gen. Thompson, they could not have prevented Mr Pakenham, as a gentleman, from exercising any influence in behalf of humanity; which, as an individual, he might possess. I regret that Gen. Thompson has placed himself in the attitude he occupies. By his own showing he was unauthorised, and I much fear that neither the act nor the motives will find a justification in truth. Mr. Pakenham will certainly regard it as an act of discourtesy on the part of Gen Thompson, if not one of faithlessness; Being fortified as I am, and being assured, from your intelligence, and feelings, that you would pursue no course, but one induced by the highest principles of honor and generosity, I am very much at ease.

I regret that our friends in the U. States should have any uneasiness on the Subject of Santa Anna's propositions. If we were to judge from the Newspapers, as well as from the private Correspondence which I receive, we might conclude that there was danger of my being favorable to retrocession to Mexico; and as for the subject of Texas becoming a British Colony and abolition in Texas, and all that, they have been exclusively confined, so far as I can learn, to Galveston, and Houston. I have never understood that they have been discussed in any other sections of the Republic. So I can neither sympathize with the distresses of our friends, nor can I entertain commiseration for their ridiculous credulity.

From our Chargé d' Affaires in Europe, we have had no recent advices. I am exceedingly anxious to hear what course Her Majesty's Government has taken on the subject of the Protest, as well as the course of the French Governmt.

I would be very happy to hear from you by every safe opportunity; and, if any thing important, by express

I hope you have had a very satisfactory interview with Doctor Jones, Secretary of State, relative to the consistent policy of this Government.

Sam. Houston

Captain Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed.] Inclosure No 1 in Captain Elliot's despatch "Secret" to the Earl of Aberdeen. Galveston June 8. 1843.

HOUSTON TO ELLIOT<sup>1</sup>

[Enclosure]. Extract of a letter from General Houston to Captain Elliot marked "Private" and dated at.

Washington Jany. 24th. 1843.<sup>2</sup>

"In relation to this Subject I am constrained to solicit the kindness of you should it not be out of the line of your official Action, that you would address Her Majesty's Minister at Mexico, and bad as matters are, make this representation.

"It is true that the Men went without orders; And so far as that was concerned the Government of Texas was not responsible, and the Men thereby placed themselves out of the protection of the rules of War. This much is granted. But the Mexican Officers by proposing terms of Capitulation to the Men relieved them from the responsibility which they had incurred, and the moment that the Men surrendered in accordance with the proposals of Capitulation they became prisoners of War, and were entitled to all immunities as such. Upon this view of the Subject I base my hopes of their Salvation, if it should be speedily presented, thro' the agency of Her Majesty's Minister to the Mexican Government. Should it be proper to do so I feel assured that your kind offices will not be wanting in an early application upon the Subject.

<sup>1</sup>F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

<sup>2</sup>See *THE QUARTERLY*, XVI, 789, note 2.

This view of the Subject seems to me the only feasible one which has presented itself to my mind”

Copy.

Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed.] Inclosure No 2 in Captain Elliot's despatch “Secret” to the Earl of Aberdeen. Galveston. June 8th. 1843.